(e) DPE's guidelines issued in March 1996, *inter-alia* clarify that ex-gratia/honorarium would not be paid over and above entitlement under the provision of Bonus Act or the Executive instructions issued by the DPE in respect of *ex-gratia* unless the amount is authorised under the duly approved incentive scheme.

(f) Does not arise.

Countervailing duties on subsidised agro-imports

2026. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is seriously thinking of imposing countervailing duties on subsidised agro-imports from US and EU; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) India has so far not applied countervailing duty on agro-imports from any Member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the US and the EU, for the purpose of offsetting subsidy on such imported products. Government will take action to apply countervailing duty on subsidized imported products in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures of the WTO either based on receipt of a duly substantiated petition from the domestic industry seeking,initiation of an investigation leading to such action or based on sufficient evidence of existence of a subsidy, injury and causal link to justify initiation of an investigation.

Infrastructure for intellectual property framework

2027. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the measures being taken by Government to strengthen the infrastructure for a better Intellectual Property framework in the country; and

(b) whether any expert group has been formed for the above purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENMAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO):.(a) Government has undertaken modernisation of intellectual property offices comprising patents, designs, trademarks and geographical indications. This includes: recruitment of technical officers, development of facilities for training, computerisation and re-engineering of work procedures, development of work manuals for ensuring uniformity in operations, preparation of data base, strengthening of library and search faculties, infrastructure up-gradation, etc. These initiatives seek to make the system efficient and user friendly as also to install an intellecutal property administration comparable to international standards.

(b) Assistance of international experts is being availed through World Intellectual Property Organization, a UN organization, specialized in intellectual property matters to structure and implement the modernization efforts efficiently.

Higher Officials under CBI investigation

†2028. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that persons posted on higher posts in different commercial institutions under his Ministry are under CBI investigation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of institutions where such officials are posted alongwith post on which they are posted;

(d) since when CBI investigation was initiated in respect of each of officials; and

(e) the present status of the each investigation case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Central Bureau of Investigation is investigating two cases against General

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.